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ABSTRACT

The open-door philosophy and the resulting diversification of the community college student body require that student personnel programs improve their services. This paper describes and analyzes new practices in student personnel services that attempt to make the open door philosophy a reality. The report briefly describes decentralization of counseling services which aims to provide better communication between faculty and counselors, to make counselors more aware of curriculum, to improve instruction through faculty-counselor consultation, to provide counseling services to more students, and to improve advising programs. The paper cites changes in orientation programs designed to help students assess themselves, and to become acquainted with the campus, community, and college programs. Other discussion focuses on the use of nonprofessional support in academic advising and the proliferation of new forms of counseling services. (Author/LAA)

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EXAMPLES OF NEW STUDENT PERSONNEL PROGRAMS CREATED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF DIVERSIFIED COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT BODIES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The basic admission policy of many community junior colleges states:

> Any high school graduate, or any person over 18 years of age who seems capable of profiting by the instruction offered, is eligible for admission.[1]

This open door philosophy connotes that not only will these persons be admitted but also

> . . . that the student, regardless of his level of achievement, will receive the best education possible in the college commensurate with his needs, efforts, motivation, and abilities.[2]

The philosophical commitment to provide formal education or training for all people regardless of social class, race, sex, or academic background carries with it the enormously difficult task of educating highly diversified student bodies.

A danger inherent in the open door policy is that it can easily become a revolving door. Fawcett expressed this problem concisely when he said,

> What does it profit an individual if the school is near enough to make attendance feasible and open enough to permit him to enter, if, once in, he is not helped in

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[1]James W. Thornton, Jr., The Community Junior College (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1972), p. 35.

[2]William Moore, Jr., Against the Odds (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1970), p. 5.

those many non-functional areas where help is necessary to promote his development?[3]

Thus, an important responsibility of a community junior college must be to provide the mechanisms and skilled assistance necessary to promote each individual's total development.

Achieving a wholistic approach to education requires multiple services. The curriculum (instructional program) and the individual, specialized services (student personnel services) are concomitant means of educating, evaluating and serving the needs of the whole student. The guidance and counseling portion of the student personnel program is claimed by community college proponents as one of the most important responsibilities and goals of the community junior college.[4] Furthermore, writers assert that the guidance function performed in two-year colleges is necessary to meet the needs of a highly diversified student body.

The open door philosophy and the resulting diversification of the community college student body requires that student personnel programs improve their services. The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze new practices in student personnel services that are attempts to make the open door philosophy a reality.

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[3]John R. Fawcett, Jr. and Jack E. Campbell, "New Dimensions in Junior College Student Personnel Administration," in New Dimensions in Student Personnel Administration, ed. by Orley R. Herron, Jr. (Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1970), p. 180.

[4]Lamar B. Johnson, Islands of Innovation Expanding (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1969).

CHAPTER II

EXAMPLES AND ANALYSIS OF NEW PROGRAMS IN STUDENT PERSONNEL SERVICES

Many community colleges tend to support the time-honored structures and practices of university student personnel services. However, a variety of new practices and organizational schemes have recently emerged which indicate promising changes for community college student affairs. Most of the practices described in this chapter are recent, within the past three years. Unfortunately there is a lack of evaluation of the effectiveness of these practices. Hopefully this evaluation void will be filled in the future.

Organization and Administration

Historically, centralized organization versus decentralized organization has been a philosophical issue in student personnel services. Early in the development of student affairs, McAllister was a proponent of decentralization while Lloyd-Jones and Williamson were advocates of centralization.[5] The latter philosophy became the dominant mode and student personnel programs centralized. Now, some community junior colleges are trying McAllister's theory of decentralization to improve and revitalize their programs.

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[5]Dugald S. Arbuckle, Student Personnel Services in Higher Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953).

Decentralization experimentation is being done primarily in the area of counseling services. In a decentralized system, the counselors are dispersed throughout the campus rather than headquartered in a counseling center. The purposes of decentralization are to provide better communication between the faculty and counselors, to make counselors more aware of the curriculum, to improve instruction through faculty-counselor consultation, to provide counseling services to a greater number of students, and to improve the advising program.

At William Rainey Harper College (Illinois), decentralization has been accomplished by assigning a professionally trained counselor to all divisions of the college.[6] The counselors are given offices in the division and function as advisors to students within the division.

El Centro College (Dallas) uses a modified decentralized system which they call a "centralized-liason approach".[7] Here the counselors are in a central location but are assigned to specific academic or occupational programs. They believe this organizational scheme will give their students the maximum benefit of both the centralized and decentralized approaches.

Moraine Valley Community College (Illinois), in building their new campus, planned for decentralized counseling services.[8]

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[6]Terry O'Bannion, "Exceptional Practices in Community Junior College Student Personnel," in Student Development Programs in the Community Junior College, ed. by Terry O'Bannion and Alice Thurston, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 183.

[7]Terry O'Bannion, New Directions in Community College Student Personnel Programs, Student Personnel Series, No. 15 (Washington D. C: American College Personnel Association, 1971), p. 16.

[8]O'Bannion, "Exceptional Practices," p. 183.

There are seven crossroads on the campus and each provides facilities for studying, relaxing, eating, socializing, and counseling. This makes seven, easily accessible counseling centers.

Portland Community College (Oregon) views counseling as an "educational shopping center".[9] Counselors are located in the library, study areas, faculty office areas, even the cafeteria. The accessibility and casualness of these settings is expected to promote greater contact between counselors and their clientele by enhancing counselor visability.

In Fulton-Montgomery Community College (New York), Student Personnel Services has been organized into an academic division.[10] In this program, curriculum development and college research are their main functions. The Student Personnel staff assumes the responsibility for assessing student characteristics and student needs. They then create and teach courses to meet these needs.

Because there is no evaluative data available on the merits of either a centralized or decentralized organizational scheme, the decisions to decentralize in these community colleges must have been based on philosophical considerations. This philosophical rationale would be more acceptable if the institutions had built some evaluative techniques into their new programs. However, none of these decentralization programs made mention of evaluation for achieving their objectives. Therefore, divergent decentralized-centralized practices will continue to be found with little objective evaluation available to assess the merits of either.

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[9] Ibid., p. 186.

[10] Ibid., p. 184.

Orientation

Orientation programs must satisfy at least three requirements if they are to help students plan a successful two-year college program. First, they must help students assess themselves -- their interests, aptitudes, and aspirations. Second, the student needs to become acquainted with the campus and the community. Third, the student needs to become acquainted with the college activities program.

To meet these objectives, Southwestern Michigan has established T. O. C. (Testing, Orientation, Counseling).[11] During the summer each entering student receives an invitation to spend a day on campus. During this day, counselors gather data about the student, discuss his goals and plans, orient him to college, and help him arrange a tentative class schedule.

Bucks County Community College had a summer counseling program which included their five full-time counselors and five high school counselors hired for the summer.[12] These counselors met with 975 incoming freshmen in individual counseling sessions that averaged one hour in length. During each session the counselors obtained student data, got acquainted, answered questions and helped the student with his class schedule. Following the counseling session, the student registered.

The only evaluation available on the above programs is

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[11]William G. Thomas and John W. Hill, "What is Innovative in Community College Student Affairs?", 1971, Seminar Paper (ERIC ED 059 706).

[12]O'Bannion, New Directions, p. 30.

that the counselors liked them. While this one subjective mode of proof leads to some accountability, other more objective data are needed to better substantiate the success of these programs.

Rochester State Junior College (Minnesota) offered a three day retreat for 150 entering students.[13] This retreat was designed to develop positive attitudes toward campus life; to stimulate the desire of the student to be active in college life; and to encourage the student to explore what a college education really means. A questionnaire was completed by the campers which indicated that ninety-nine percent were enthusiastic about the program. Only 150 of 900 entering freshmen were allowed to attend the retreat. This suggests an excellent orientation program for a few students but nothing for the many.

Grossmont College (California) required that all freshmen take a twelve week orientation course.[14] The first meeting each week was a lecture which dealt with human rights, war and peace, alienation, and other current issues. The second meeting was a seminar which allowed students to express their feelings about the issues. Evaluation of the program indicated that it may have had a part in lowering the attrition rate from thirteen percent to three percent since the inauguration of the program. Because of its apparent success, Grossmont is planning to continue the project. However, they will expand it to include more standard orientation offerings as well as controversial issues.

Each of the programs discussed above attempts to satisfy the

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[13] O'Bannion, "Exceptional Practices," p. 192.

[14] Ibid., p. 191.

three orientation requirements enumerated earlier. Counselor opinions and student questionnaires help in revealing strengths and weaknesses about the programs. However, that assessment is incomplete. Objective evaluation of each of the programs is needed and only Grossmont has developed instruments and procedures to meet this requirement.

Academic Advising

A recent study[15] of students from three midwest community colleges compared their perceptions relative to their experiences with professional counselors and faculty advisors. The students indicated that counselors were significantly more concerned, accepting, genuine, approachable and effective in meeting their needs than were faculty members.

The results of this study pose an interesting dilemma. Faculty members are sufficient in number to handle the advisory program but many do not have the necessary advising skills. Counseling staffs with a counselor-student ratio of one to 400, 500, or 600 have the skills but not the numbers. This shortage of well-qualified advisory staff may be alleviated by the proper and judicious use of appropriately trained nonprofessional support personnel.

Merramec Community College (St. Louis) employs support personnel to perform academic advising.[16] These people are selected

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[15]Joe B. Shelton, A Comparison of Faculty Academic Advising and Academic Advising by Professional Counselors, Final Report to Johnson County Community College, Shawnee Mission, Kansas. (ERIC ED 065 088).

[16]O'Bannion, "Exceptional Practices," p. 184-5.

for qualities of warmth, maturity, open-mindedness and potential for working with counselors and students. Their functions are two-fold: accumulate information and disseminate information. As information gatherers, the support personnel are responsible for accumulating transfer, follow-up and referral source data. As information givers they perform academic advising, distribute transfer information and refer students to other sources of help when necessary.

At Central Oregon Community College, a peer counseling program has been established.[17] This is essentially a buddy system where present students help entering students find their way around, plan their class schedules and listen to their problems. A counselor trainer holds regularly scheduled training sessions with these nonprofessional student counselors to provide them with the necessary knowledge and support.

Bellevue Community College (Washington) has returning women function as peer counselors to other returning women.[18] The focus of the program is to help women discover and enter a satisfying career field.

Macomb County Community College (Michigan) has proposed a student operated, drop-in counseling center[19] to serve the drug

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[17]American Association of Community and Junior Colleges American Indian Programs Conference Proceedings, Educational Need of American Indians: A Challenge to Community Colleges (Spokane, Washington, October, 1972).

[18]"Bellvue Puts Them to Work," Checkpoint, Clearinghouse for Innovative Education (Olympia, Washington: Washington State Board for Community College Education, April, 1973), p. 9.

[19]Adam Mick, Jr., Macomb County Community College Drop-In Counseling Center: Proposal (Warren, Michigan: Macomb County Community College, May, 1971, ERIC ED 058 598).

dependent young adult population (18-30) both on campus and throughout the entire county.

Research supporting the use of nonprofessional support personnel in community colleges is sparce. Of the programs discussed above, Merramec was the only college to evaluate its program. Positive results were found.[20] Other research studies are available which support the use of nonprofessionals in counseling and personnel work.

Alcoholics Anonymous has always utilized nonprofessionals in therapy settings. Moreover, recent research reports that housewives have been utilized successfully in crisis clinics,[21] that undergraduate female students have been effective with mental patients,[22] and that counselor aides have been change agents in certain therapy situations.[23] The evidence presented by all of these research studies is that nonprofessionals can be at least as effective as professionals in many kinds of therapeutic relationships.

The use of nonprofessional support personnel is increasing in community junior colleges. A survey of professional staff members in California indicated a positive attitude toward the

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[20] O'Bannion, "Exceptional Practices," p. 185.

[21] M. J. Rioch, et al. "NIMH Pilot Study in Training Mental Health Counselors," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 33 (1963), 678-9.

[22] E. G. Poser, "The Effect of Therapists' Training on Group Therapeutic Outcome," Journal of Consulting Psychology, 30 (1966), 283-9.

[23] Charles B. Truax and James L. Lister, "Effectiveness of Counselors and Counselor Aides," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 17 (1970), 331-4.

increased use of nonprofessional in student personnel work[24] and

> Several junior colleges have begun or are planning two-year associate in arts degree programs to prepare workers for these positions.[25]

The trend appears to be toward expanding the use of support personnel programs in community colleges.

The use of nonprofessional support personnel is one of the more promising programs in the community college system. This could be a viable alternative to some student personnel problems. Social distance has proven to be a factor in decreasing the effectiveness of a counselor's relationship with members of lower socio-economic and minority groups.[26] Professional training programs have tended to lower the facilitative conditions offered by therapists.[27] Time and money have been a problem for all personnel workers. Perhaps the use of nonprofessionals could provide for these needs.

Counseling

"Counseling is the key feature for all student personnel work."[28]

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[24] The Role of the Paraprofessional in Community College Pupil Personnel Services (Stockton, California: San Joaquin Delta College, 1971, ERIC ED 054 776).

[25] Jane E. Matson, "Student Personnel Work Four Years Later: The Carnegie Study and Its Impact," in Student Development Programs in the Community Junior College (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 172.

[26] R. R. Carkhuff and R. Pierce, "The Differential Effects of Therapist Race and Social Class upon Patient Depth of Self-Exploration in the Initial Clinical Interview," Journal of Consulting Psychology, 31 (1967), 632-4.

[27] R. R. Carkhuff, et al. "The Effects of Graduate Training," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 15 (1968), 68-74.

[28] Clyde E. Blocker, et al. The Two-Year College: A Social Synthesis (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 252.

One of the most rapidly growing counseling methods is group counseling also known as T-groups, encounter groups, sensitivity training, synanon, Self-awareness groups, human potential seminars, ad infinitum. Many community colleges claim the use of group counseling as an innovative program. Since its use is so wide spread, this writer feels it should no longer be classified as innovative. However, there are some exciting, new counseling programs that have been recently developed.

One such counseling program is a Mobile Counseling Center (Contra Costa, California).[29] The purposes of this program are to provide services for dropouts, extend counseling services to the community, strengthen connections with other community agencies, recruit students and improve the college's image within its community. Three annual follow-up studies of this program [30] indicated that it was successful in providing linkages where there had been none. The counselor was able to make direct contact with many people who were unaware of services available to them. Contact was made with the unemployed, poor and dropout who would usually not initiate a contact with the local community college. Because of this program, the college was made aware of community needs that had previously gone unnoticed.

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[29] Anthony T. Gordon, Evaluation of First Year of Operation of the Contra Costa College Mobile Counseling Center (San Pablo, California: Contra Costa College, January, 1969, ERIC ED 031 243).

[30] Ibid. Anthony T. Gordon, Evaluation of Second Year of Operation of the Contra Costa College Mobile Counseling Center (San Pablo, California: Contra Costa College, 1970, ERIC ED 043 332). Howard Edwards, Evaluation of Third Year of Operation of the Contra Costa College Mobile Counseling Center (San Pablo, California: Contra Costa College, 1971, ERIC ED 061 927).

Another innovative program can be found at Central Oregon Community College and Wenatchee Valley Community College.[31] Both of these institutions have hired Native American counselors to work off campus. The responsibility of both counselors is to identify and encourage Native American students who could benefit from further education. It is expected that these counselors will help Native American students bridge the gap between their perceived opportunities and the real opportunities available to them.

Flint Community College (Michigan) has hired one full-time and one part-time counselor to provide educational and vocational counseling to all women within their community.[32] The counselors communicate with the women who attend the community college, support and follow-up on reentering students, refer women to community agencies and generally work to meet the needs of the women in their community. Evaluation of the service is based on a follow-up of individuals served. The evaluation is in progress now.

St. Petersburg Junior College has established six outreach centers throughout the community.[33] The centers are staffed by both paid employees and volunteers, professionals and nonprofessionals. The centers are to provide counseling, tutoring and other special services to the inner city community. Students who would not normally attend the community college have been recruited by employees of the outreach centers.

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[31]American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Educational Need.

[32]O'Bannion, New Directions, p. 35.

[33]Thomas and Hill, What is Innovative.

As with the programs discussed in other sections of this chapter, there was a distinct lack of evaluation tools for these new counseling projects. The reports available make the programs sound like exciting, viable alternatives but hard data is needed to support the rhetoric. The Mobile Counseling Center of Contra Costa College was the only program with objective evaluative support data to justify its continued existence.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Community colleges do provide student personnel services but these services tend to be either minimal or there is insufficient data to adequately describe them. Research of the kind that would facilitate institutional planning and an improvement of student personnel services is lacking. An important aspect of program development must be research. Research information about student characteristics, length of time students remain, what students do after they leave the community college and many others would seem essential to the development of viable programs. Despite the value of such data, very little seems to have been compiled.

If student personnel workers are to function as change agents they must first have clear perceptions of existing student attitudes. They must spend time in the diagnosis of student needs and the development of imaginative programs for students. Student personnel workers must become facilitators or consultants and experts in applied educational psychology. They must help change the teaching methods of the staff, consider the possibility of integrating student and academic affairs offices, and modify the system that generates the problems.

The most recent literature is pointing toward accountability for student personnel workers. For example,

Student personnel workers must evaluate and quantify what

> they are trying to do, what means they are using and what progress they are making.[34]
>
> The purposes of student personnel work should be stated in specific behavioral goals . . .[35]
>
> Current systems theory will increasingly force the various segments of a campus to define their functions and then be evaluated on the basis of those definitions.[36]
>
> It is only through research and evaluation that the institution can determine whether its educational program is approximating its purposes, goals and standards.[37]
>
> There is a distinct need to develop the research and evaluation functions within the student personnel department, especially with the purpose of assessing student needs and developing services which will meet these needs.[38]
>
> If definite objectives are to set a pattern for general practice, they cannot be endorsed until they are broken down into their component parts and all their implications are translated into concrete applications.[39]

There have been increasingly successful efforts to use operations analysis to manage and predict sociological events. Many new schemes such as PPBS, ERMS, PERT, Management by Objectives, and Voucher Systems are being suggested to implement accountability. The trend toward accountability is in the community and the pro-

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[34]John J. Marsh, "Operations Analysis and College Student Personnel Work," NASPA Journal, VIII (January, 1971), p. 202.

[35]Terry O'Bannion, "Purposes of College and University Student Personnel Work," NASPA Journal, VIII (January, 1971), p. 206.

[36]Editorial, NASPA Journal, VII (January, 1970), p. 129.

[37]Esther McD. Lloyd-Jones and Margaret Ruth Smith, A Student Personnel Program for Higher Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, Inc., 1938), p. 278.

[38]A. Jean Hill, "A Comparative Study of the Student Personnel Administrative Organization in All Accredited Public Four-Year Institutions in the Pacific Northwest" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Washington State University, 1972).

[39]Kate Hevner Mueller, Student Personnel Work in Higher Education (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), p. 68.

fessional literature suggests that community college student personnel workers take note. Pupil personnel services in the community college must become a science or it might become an artifact.

The brief survey of the literature presented in this paper leads to the conclusion that very little that is innovative is taking place in community college student affairs.

A survey of public school superintendents in 1969-70 indicated that the second most crucial need of education was "demands for new ways of teaching or operating educational programs"[40] or, stated in other terms, a need for educational innovation. This need for innovation is also crucial for the community junior college. But according to Edmund Gleazer,

> . . . we do not know how flexible we can be because we hardly ever stretch that much.[41]

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[40] Stephen J. Knezevich, ed., The American School Superintendent (Washington D. C.: American Association of School Administrators, 1971), p. 57.

[41] Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr., "A Time of Change," Junior College Journal, 40 (April, 1970), p. 5.

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